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INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 2293
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 5754
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 9358
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 6943
RUEKJCS/Joint STAFF WASHDC
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
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RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2727
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 RANGOON 000659

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP AND IO; PACOM FOR FPA

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SUBJECT: BURMA: NLD SUPPORTS POLICY REVIEW, CAUTIONS AGAINST ANY DEAL THAT WOULD CUT OUT THE PARTY

Classified By: P/E Chief Jennifer A. Harhigh for Reasons 1.4 (b) & (d)

Summary

¶1. (C) During a September 24 meeting with National League for Democracy (NLD) Central Executive Committee (CEC) members, CDA previewed the expected outcomes of the USG policy review. The Uncles responded positively, noting they appreciate the USG's interest in increasing engagement with the GOB, see the need for increased humanitarian assistance inside Burma, and agree that no near-term sanctions relief is the right approach. They emphasized a bilateral dialogue should not obscure the need for internal dialogue among the SPDC, NLD, and other opposition forces. CDA reassured the Uncles the USG sees a meaningful dialogue between the GOB and Burma's democratic forces as a central goal. An NLD spokesman suggested Washington use the nuclear issue as a way to press for progress during talks with the regime. End summary.

CDA previews likely policy review outcomes

¶2. (C) CDA and P/E Chief met September 24 with NLD CEC members Than Tun, Nyunt Wei, and Khin Maung Swe, plus other senior NLD leaders to discuss likely outcomes of the USG policy review. CDA relayed the themes of the Secretary's statement at the UN Friends of Burma meeting and detailed the major expected outcomes of the review: the USG will maintain its strategic goals, with democracy and human rights remaining priorities; increase bilateral engagement to pursue those goals; undertake no near-term change on sanctions absent concrete progress on core issues; expand humanitarian assistance that doesn't buttress the regime; continue a measured approach to 2010 elections; add focus on regional/international engagement; and take a long-term outlook.

Uncles respond positively, but caution U.S. not to "cut a deal" without NLD

¶3. (C) The Uncles responded positively, noting they appreciate the increased USG willingness to engage with the

GOB, see the need for increased humanitarian assistance, and agree that no near-term sanctions relief is the right approach. Khin Maung Swe and NLD MP-elect and former political prisoner Than Nyein emphasized the importance of dialogue between the SPDC and Burma's democratic forces, especially Aung San Suu Kyi (ASSK) and the NLD, on Burma's political future. They expressed concern that the SPDC may calculate it can cut a deal with the U.S. on Burma's future without involving the NLD.

CDA: USG emphasis on dialogue among Burmese

4.. (C) In response, the CDA reconfirmed that democracy and human rights are central topics for dialogue, with the USG intending to stress the need for the various Burmese players to engage seriously among themselves on the core issues. Thus, the U.S. does not intend to "cut a deal" with the GOB without the democratic forces being involved; but the hope is that increased bilateral engagement will encourage the GOB to enter serious discussion with its internal opposition.

15. (C) Than Nyein expressed worry that Senator Webb's focus on geopolitical issues such as increased dependence on China may have drawn the regime's attention away from the topics of democratic principles and human rights. The CDA reiterated the review's emphasis on core values.

FM's trip to Washington

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16. (C) Khin Maung Swe inquired about Foreign Minister Nyan Win's meeting with Senator Webb in Washington. The CDA explained the State Department approved the Foreign Minister's trip to visit the GOB's Embassy, but no Administration official met with Nyan Win in Washington. Senator Webb was acting on his own, not as an envoy of the Administration. When asked if high-level dialogue might begin soon, the CDA replied it is a possibility.

NLD Spokesman: start with the nuclear issue

17. (C) NLD spokesman Hanthar Myint suggested the U.S. seize upon the Burma nuclear issue as a way to press for progress during dialogue. He said the regime understands military might, and he proposed that only the presence of U.S. military ships had forced the generals to allow relief workers access to the post-Nargis Delta. Khin Maung Swe suggested the Secretary's statement of public concern about Burma-North Korea cooperation had prompted the generals to respond positively regarding UNSC Resolution 1874.

Comment

18. (C) During the session, intended to gauge the NLD's initial reaction to our policy review outcomes, the Uncles were very clear. ASSK's party is fine with USG-GOB engagement....so long as the NLD has a central role, too. Given that one of the USG core intentions for Burma is a constructive dialogue among the internal Burmese players (regime, NLD, and ethnic groups) about the political future, it makes sense to stress during the formal policy roll-out that any USG dialogue with the regime will continue to emphasize the importance of internal Burmese dialogue, including with ASSK and the NLD.

DINGER